

ADDRESS OF SENATOR STROM THURMOND (D-SC) TO ROTARY CLUB AND REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER SERVICE CLUBS, SUMTER, S.C., NOVEMBER 11, 1957, AT 1:00 P.M.

Actions of the First Session of the 85th Congress

Grave problems have faced the American people during the year 1957: civil rights problems, farm problems, housing problems, missile problems, and others of importance.

It is my desire today to acquaint you with the action taken by Congress on some of the more important issues considered during the first session of the 85th Congress. I shall present the pluses and minuses, so that you can see both sides of the ledger.

Since last January the President has submitted a total of 155 recommendations to the Congress. Action has been completed on 67, 5 have been rejected, and the remainder are in various stages of the legislative process.

On the domestic front, it is my opinion that the most constructive action taken by the Congress during this past session was the reduction of the budget. President Eisenhower originally requested Congress to authorize the spending of \$73.3 billion. Later he reduced his request slightly, but the Congress reduced the budget even more. Congress ended by cutting the President's request \$5.6 billion.

Although I consider this a very constructive move on the part of the Congress, I believe the budget could have been and should have been reduced further.

Between ten and eleven billion dollars will be used to pay the interest on the national debt this year. This means that

more than ten cents out of every dollar spent by the Federal Government will be for the purpose of paying interest on money the Government has borrowed from the people. This does not include reducing the \$275 billion national debt itself. An additional two cents out of every dollar must be spent for reducing the debt principal.

However, Congress took a forward step when it succeeded in reducing the budget request by \$5.6 billion. This reduction did not harm our military missiles program, as Congress appropriated every dollar the Administration requested for research and development in our missile program. In the last fiscal year we spent \$2.4 billion on missiles, and in the current fiscal year \$2.9 billion is programmed.

There is cause for belief, however, that our missile program suffered from feuding between the services; and the Administration, until recently, failed to take steps to correct the situation.

General Holger N. Toftoy, Commander of the Army's Redstone Arsenal in Alabama, stated not long ago that the Army could have launched a simple satellite on a few months' notice at any time since the Fall of 1954. But the authorities would not allow the Army to do this, as the satellite project had been given to the Navy.

If General Toftoy was correct, then a grievous error was made. There is no doubt that the Russians scored a tremendous propaganda victory by sending up the first satellite. I was in Europe at the time, and Sputnik made big headlines. There is no

doubt that the Europeans were greatly impressed. *Within the past few days, announcement has been made that the army has received -2- the go-ahead to send up a satellite by using its Jupiter. It is hoped there will now be no further delay in proceeding with the program.*

President Eisenhower announced last week that he had appointed James R. Killian, a South Carolinian and President of Massachusetts Institute of Technology to take command of the nation's scientific defense program. I think we can now take heart that the program will go forward at full speed.

The most important achievement of the last Congress in the field of foreign affairs was its unanimous approval of the Middle East Resolution. This resolution will permit the President to take action against any Communist aggression in the Middle East. It authorizes him to use troops for that purpose, if necessary, and provides for \$200 million military assistance to friendly nations in the Middle East.

I am sure we can be more confident of the results to be obtained from the spending of this \$200 million than of most of the money which has been spent overseas, because South Carolina's distinguished son, former Congressman James P. Richards, directed the use of these funds while acting as special Ambassador to the Middle East.

I believe this legislation has played a decisive part in calming emotions in the Mid-East arising out of last year's Suez crisis. It re-established faith and friendship between our country and certain Arabic countries, such as Jordan and Saudi Arabia, at a time when our relations with them were at a breaking point. If they had broken, a power vacuum would have been created which the Russians would have filled in time. Our large oil interests and military bases in the Mid-East would have crumbled.

I would like to mention two other bills in the field of

foreign affairs which I think were, like the Middle East Resolution, a step forward. One of these bills provides for United States participation in the Atoms for Peace program. This program is one of international participation and gives its members an opportunity to demonstrate their good will toward each other and toward other nations in the world. Ample safeguards are written into this bill to protect the secrets and welfare of our country. The Atoms for Peace program is strictly non-military in character, and the information and aid to be exchanged will be used to improve the economic and medical uses of nuclear energy, with a view toward making this world a better place in which to live.

The second bill which I want to mention provides for \$3.3 billion in foreign aid. I voted against this bill. Every day new evidence of the waste and extravagance of our economic foreign aid program comes to light. The only reason I mention this item is because Congress cut the President's budget request from \$4.4 billion to \$3.3 billion. In making this cut, Congress provided for a new loan program to foreign countries. This is a definite step forward, and I hope, in time, loans which will be repaid will supplant direct gifts to foreign countries.

In the agricultural field, Congress attempted to provide additional help for farmers by appropriating a billion dollars for the disposal of surplus crops by selling them overseas. Also for the farmers, Congress approved a new soil conservation program to extend help to drought-stricken areas.

Another bill approved at the past session increased by

\$26 million the Farmers' Home Administration Authority to make farm ownership loans.

I believe that one of the major programs to be considered in 1958 will be a revision of the soil bank program and efforts to further assist hard pressed farmers.

In an effort to further assist small businesses, Congress increased the business loan authority for the Small Business Administration and authorized \$45 million more for use by the Small Business Administration for the year ending this past July 30 as well as providing \$66 million more for the year ending July 30, 1958.

A number of bills were passed to stimulate the home building program, including additional authorization for the Federal National Mortgage Association to purchase additional mortgages. In an effort to create a greater interest in our citizens' saving through the purchase of government bonds, the interest rate was increased on U.S. Savings Bonds from a maximum of 3 to 3½%.

Another progressive step was the creation of an Airways Modernization Board to work out a new system of controlling air traffic in an expanding jet plane era. This was a very important step, and I hope that adequate regulations will be worked out at the earliest possible time so as to prevent tragic accidents in the air.

Among the bills on which Congress did not act were several which deserved no action. Included in this group is the proposal to provide Federal aid to build schools. There is ample evidence to show that the States are taking care of their own classroom

problems. Furthermore, the Federal Government has no constitutional authority to legislate in this field. I have consistently opposed this program, and I believe the wisdom of continuing to oppose appropriating Federal money for the construction of local schools is demonstrated by what we have been witnessing in Little Rock.

Another bill which was among the President's requests and on which Congress did not act is the proposal to have the United States become a member of the so-called Organization for Trade Co-operation. The purpose of this organization is to carry on negotiations between countries concerning importing and exporting goods. It is my opinion that the result of participating in it would be to reduce our necessary protective tariffs--tariffs which are vital to the life of our great textile industry. For this reason, I oppose the bill. The trouble with most of these so-called cooperative organizations is that most foreign countries seem to think cooperation means concessions by the United States.

One of the pending bills which I would like to see passed by Congress is a bill which would give the President authority to veto selected items in appropriation bills without vetoing the entire bill. I believe it would be advantageous to the country to give the President this authority, because it would enable him to reduce many unnecessary expenditures which are sometimes passed through the Congress as "pork barrel" or political appropriations. This type of appropriation is frequently attached to an appropriation of such importance and

urgency that the President cannot afford to veto the whole bill without harming our national welfare. The Governor of our state has this authority, and I believe the exercise of the item veto has succeeded in reducing state expenditures. What it has done on the state level, it could do on the national level, too.

I have several bills of my own pending in Senate committees which I believe should be passed. One would prohibit the serving and drinking of alcoholic beverages on airplanes. Another would prevent the setting aside of government contracts for labor surplus areas or so-called depressed areas. Still another would require contractors working for the federal government to pay local taxes without exemption, such as the South Carolina sales tax.

In connection with the farm problem, I introduced a bill which is still pending in the Senate Agriculture Committee to provide for 90% parity on the basic farm commodities. I have also introduced a bill to provide a standard income tax deduction for small businesses and another to provide for import quotas on plywood being brought into this country from overseas. One of my bills deals with a subject which probably would affect about as many individual citizens as any matter before the Congress. I am referring to S. 2268, which would prohibit the charging of a fee for viewing telecasts in the home, or more simply, would prevent pay television. I hope that early action may be taken on this bill in 1958 in view of the recent authority granted by the Federal Communications Commission for certain speculators to try out pay television in test operations.

Another bill of mine, which is pending in the Senate Finance Committee, would require certain organizations which sponsor lawsuits to pay federal income tax from which they are now free. This would include organizations which inject themselves into school segregation cases where they have no business.

Another bill of mine would limit the appellate jurisdiction of the federal courts and prevent the circuit courts of appeal and the United States Supreme Court from meddling in our school affairs. That brings me to what I believe was the most destructive step taken by Congress in many years. I refer, of course, to passage of the civil rights bill which plunged the federal government into a place it had no business--into the elections of the states. This vicious piece of legislation also denies citizens the constitutionally guaranteed and precious right of trial by jury in certain cases. The bill sets up a six-man Presidential commission to investigate the status of civil rights in the states. Actually, this commission is authorized, under the law which I opposed in a 24-hour speech, to meddle into the affairs of the states and may be expected to attempt to force integration in the public schools.

If this bill had been defeated and no legislation passed on any subject by the Congress, we would have been better off than we are now, with all the constructive bills passed by Congress and this dangerous and destructive bill. I shall not expand my views on this bill further at this time except to say that I shall continue to fight against it with every means at my command.